

The reign of James began on February 6, 1685; on June 11 Monmouth landed at Lyme. When Macaulay wrote, the chief modern authority on the career of Monmouth and his expedition to England was the *Life* by George Roberts published in 1844—a work of considerable re-search and still worth consulting. A new biography entitled *King Monmouth* (1902), by Allan Fea, brings together many new details, and contains some additional documents. But this new evidence in no way alters the old conception of Monmouth's character. His weakness and vanity made his misfortunes inevitable.

On the other hand much light upon the origin of the expedition is afforded by the deposition of a certain Robert Cragg,¹ an agent employed by Monmouth's friends in England in March 1685 to persuade him to go with Argyle to Scotland instead of coming to England. This narrative reveals very clearly the dissensions amongst Monmouth's partisans. It also to some extent implicates Lord Delamere, who was subsequently tried but acquitted.²

Monmouth was accompanied on the expedition by Robert Ferguson the Plotter, whom Macaulay describes as Monmouth's 'evil angel'.³ He is said to have written Monmouth's declaration and to have persuaded him to assume the title of king. A *Life* of Ferguson by James Ferguson,

published in 1887, refutes some of Macaulay's statements*

Ferguson himself said that he thought it inexpedient for

Monmouth to take the title at that juncture and wished him

to confine himself to asserting a claim to the crown, leaving

Parliament to decide upon its validity later.

On the military measures against Monmouth there is

also new evidence. The local militia which was at first

¹ It is printed in Manuscripts of the House of Lords, 1689-1690.

*II, 697-700 (vi).

*II, 526-7, 5⁶⁴» 57&-⁸» 65°

(v)-